

Assessment of Intercity Bus Services in Nebraska

UNO Center for Public Affairs Research
on behalf of the Nebraska Department of Roads

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) defines intercity bus service as regularly scheduled bus service for the general public that operates with limited stops over fixed routes connecting two or more urban areas not in close proximity, that has the capacity for transporting baggage carried by passengers and that makes meaningful connections with scheduled intercity bus service to more distance points, if such service is available. In rural states like Nebraska, intercity bus service is most often used to connect rural areas with larger urbanized areas.

The Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR) has partnered with the University of Nebraska at Omaha Center for Public Affairs Research (CPAR) to conduct a statewide intercity bus study. The objectives of this study include the following.

1. Identify existing intercity bus service.
2. Interview intercity bus providers.
3. Conduct public information open houses to identify ridership demographics.
4. Gather public input to identify gaps in service.
5. Summarize the information gathered.
6. Develop an action plan to address intercity bus needs.
7. Share the study findings with the transportation community and general public.

II. SUBSIDIZED INTERCITY BUS PROVIDERS

Currently, NDOR subsidizes four intercity bus providers with FTA Section 5311 funds. The providers who request funding are required to submit an operating assistance application annually. Approved applicants submit monthly invoices for reimbursement. NDOR reimburses the operating deficit using 50% Federal and 50% State funds. Because the State intercity bus funds are capped at \$95,000 annually, NDOR expends the state funds and then continues to support the intercity bus providers with 50% Federal funds.

III. CURRENT INTERCITY BUS SERVICES AVAILABLE IN NEBRASKA

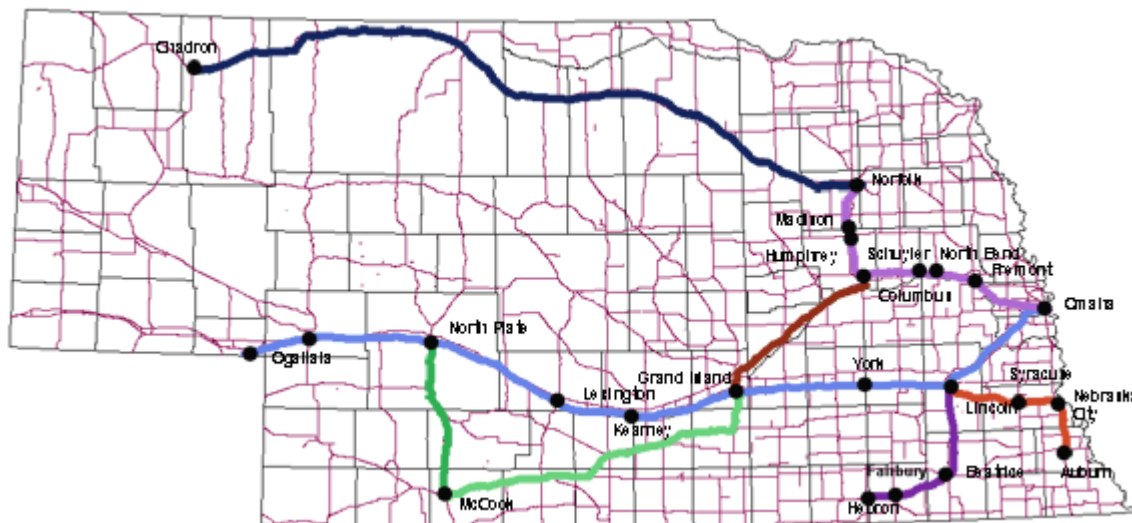
There are seven intercity bus service providers currently providing service on various routes across the state of Nebraska. As described previously, four are subsidized by the State of Nebraska and three are not. In addition, one feeder service, subsidized directly through FTA, is included in this study.

The routes and stops of four of the providers are defined by a regular schedule with scheduled stops. Three providers have a regular schedule with scheduled stops but also accommodate additional stops on demand. Reservations must be made for additional stops and stops must be directly on the route between the scheduled stops. The additional stops may require an additional fee. There is usually a limited number of additional stops that can be made on each run in order to maintain the route schedule. The feeder service does not have a regular schedule or stops but provides services on demand.

Table 3.1. Service Descriptions and Number of Counties Served by Intercity Bus Service Providers, Nebraska: 2014

Service Provider	Service Description	Number of Counties in Nebraska Served
Subsidized		
Dashabout Shuttle Company	1. Omaha - Colorado 2. McCook - Omaha 3. McCook - North Platte 4. Grand Island - Columbus <i>All routes accommodate additional stops on demand</i>	21
K & S Express	1. Norfolk – Chadron <i>Route accommodates additional stops on demand</i>	8
Black Hills Stage Lines	1. Omaha – Lincoln – Grand Island – Kearney – Lexington – North Platte – Ogallala 2. Omaha – Fremont – North Bend – Schuyler – Humphrey – Madison - Norfolk	10
Blue Rivers Area Agency on Aging	1. Hebron – Fairbury – Beatrice – Lincoln 2. Auburn – Nebraska City – Syracuse – Lincoln – Omaha	6
Not Subsidized		
Burlington Trailways	1. Ogallala – North Platte – Lexington – Kearney – Grand Island – Lincoln - Omaha	7
Navigator Airport Express	1. Kearney – Grand Island – York – Lincoln -- Omaha	4
Omalink	1. Omaha – Lincoln <i>Route accommodates additional stops on demand</i>	4
Feeder Service		
Ponca Express	On-demand service in Ponca Delivery Area	11

The map below shows the scheduled routes and stops for the seven intercity bus service. Some routes are covered by more than one provider, for example, Black Hills Stage Lines, Burlington Trailways, and Dashabout Shuttle Company cover the entire Interstate 80 route from Omaha to the Colorado border. As described in Table 3.1, additional stops on many of the routes are available on demand.

Figure 3.1. Routes of Intercity Bus Services, Nebraska: 2014

Prepared by UNO Center for Public Affairs Research, June 2014

The current intercity bus service providers serve five of the nine metropolitan counties, 10 of the 20 micropolitan counties and 21 of the 64 rural counties. The one feeder service included in this study provides service to 1 additional micropolitan county and 4 additional rural counties. Metropolitan counties are those that are part of a metropolitan area. Micropolitan counties are those that include an urban area with a population of 10,000 to 49,999 plus surrounding counties that are linked through commuting ties.

A total of 41 of the 93 counties in Nebraska are served by the providers included in this study. These counties contain 84.0% of Nebraska's total population.

The current intercity bus service providers offer scheduled stops in 24 municipalities, 16 of these are in first class city or larger municipalities with 5,000 population or higher. Four of the providers allow additional stops on the routes. These routes are along Interstate 80; portions of highways 34 (McCook to Grand Island), 83 (McCook to North Platte), 30 (Grand Island to Columbus), 275 (Norfolk to Holt County), and 20 (Holt County to Chadron), and throughout the Ponca Service Delivery Area. This provides service to an additional eight first class city or larger municipalities.

Table 3.2. Counties and Population Served by Intercity Bus Providers, Nebraska: 2014

County Served/ Type of County	Dashabout Shuttle Company	K & S Express	Black Hills Stage Lines	Blue Rivers AAA	Burlington Trailways	Navigator Airport Express	Omalink	Ponca Express	2013 Estimated Population
Metropolitan Counties									
Cass	X						X		25,357
Douglas	X		X		X	X	X	X	537,256
Lancaster	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	297,036
Sarpy	X						X	X	169,331
Seward	X								17,089
Micropolitan Counties									
Adams	X								31,610
Buffalo	X		X		X	X			47,893
Dawson	X		X		X				24,207
Dodge			X						36,515
Gage				X					21,864
Hall	X		X		X	X		X	60,720
Kearney	X								6,548
Lincoln	X		X		X				36,051
Madison		X	X					X	35,278
Merrick	X								7,802
Platte								X	32,505
Rural Counties									
Antelope		X							6,456
Brown		X							2,926
Burt								X	6,474
Cherry		X							5,788
Colfax			X						10,425
Dawes		X							9,088
Deuel	X								1,937
Frontier	X								2,709

County Served/ Type of County	Dashabout Shuttle Company	K & S Express	Black Hills Stage Lines	Blue Rivers AAA	Burlington Trailways	Navigator Airport Express	Omalink	Ponca Express	2013 Estimated Population
Rural Counties (continued)									
Furnas	X								4,865
Hamilton	X								9,112
Harlan	X								3,513
Holt		X						X	10,449
Jefferson				X					7,560
Keith	X		X		X				8,130
Knox								X	8,565
Nemaha				X					7,157
Otoe				X					15,752
Phelps	X								9,213
Red Willow	X								11,006
Rock		X							1,411
Sheridan		X							5,251
Stanton								X	6,133
Thayer				X					5,189
Wayne								X	9,411
York	X								13,883
Total population served									1,569,465
Nebraska									1,868,516
Percent of total population served									84.0%

Areas lacking service

There are 12 first class cities that do not have scheduled stops and which are not on the routes of those providers that make additional stops.

There are four metropolitan counties not served: Dakota, Dixon, Washington, and Saunders. There are nine micropolitan counties not served: Scotts Bluff, Banner, McPherson, Logan, Gosper, Clay, Howard, Stanton, and Pierce.

Other Intercity Transportation Options

Other intercity transportation options for those who either do not drive or choose not to drive include being transported by relatives or neighbors, private for profit transportation services, Amtrak and airline service.

Amtrak

Amtrak operates one long-distance train through Nebraska, the California Zephyr, which runs one train in each direction daily. Amtrak has stations in Omaha, Lincoln, Hastings, Holdrege and McCook.

Table 3.3. Amtrak Passenger Boardings and Alightings, Nebraska: FY 2007 – FY 2013

City	Boardings and Alightings						
	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013
Omaha	25,480	25,627	25,496	25,855	20,668	22,794	24,410
Lincoln	10,616	10,820	10,703	10,770	11,756	12,468	13,160
Hastings	4,085	4,096	4,073	4,084	4,839	5,358	5,865
Holdrege	1,715	1,678	1,671	1,695	1,623	2,296	2,335
McCook	3,205	3,189	3,173	3,175	2,939	3,540	3,638

Source: Amtrak Fact Sheets, www.amtrak.com

Airline Service

Nebraska has nine airports with scheduled airline service, six of which are in rural areas of the state.

Table 3.4. Passenger Enplanements at Airports with Scheduled Service, Nebraska: 2008-2012

Airport location	Enplanements				
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Omaha	2,136,880	2,083,973	2,097,958	2,047,055	2,018,738
Lincoln	163,177	142,507	139,532	135,647	135,085
Grand Island	7,961	20,136	37,101	47,167	56,138
Scottsbluff	10,680	9,221	9,864	9,912	10,356
Kearney	11,956	10,113	9,530	11,079	12,480
North Platte	10,288	7,924	8,391	10,962	10,962
McCook	1,848	1,677	1,993	1,810	1,623
Chadron	2,152	1,875	1,769	1,980	2,037
Alliance	1,786	1,395	1,416	1,730	1,594

IV. INTERCITY BUS SERVICE PROVIDER INTERVIEWS

To gather information from the intercity bus service providers a questionnaire was developed by CPAR and approved by NDOR. The questionnaire was designed as a way to conduct consistent interviews with a representative of each provider. A list of providers and contact information was provided by NDOR.

A representative of each provider was contacted and an interview was requested. Prior to each scheduled interview an email was sent to the representative. This email included additional information about the assessment including contact information for NDOR, the list of interview questions, and an option to complete the questionnaire online. If the representative did not complete the online questionnaire before the interview then the interview was conducted.

The interview process began April 1 and was completed June 6. The long time span was a result of difficulty in making contact with the providers, confusion on the part of the provider about the best person to complete the interview, missed interviews and lack of cooperation.

There are eight providers included in this study. Interviews or questionnaires were completed for six of them and the findings summarized below.

Navigator Airport Express would not schedule an interview and did not complete the online questionnaire.

Ponca Express completed an interview but does not identify as an intercity bus service provider. Their understanding is that the FTA funding they receive is for rural-to-rural transportation, and they are not allowed to pick-up from and deliver people to urban areas (Omaha, Lincoln and South Sioux City). Based on this interpretation, their practice is to only take passengers to urban areas if those same passengers are returning to a rural location by the end of the day.

Three providers completed an interview: Omalink, Blackhills Stage Lines, and Dashabout Shuttle Company. Two providers completed the online questionnaire: K & S Express, Blue Rivers Area Agency on Aging. One provider emailed a list of responses to the list of questions: Burlington Trailways.

Current Service and Primary Purpose for Travel

Six of the providers indicated they do provide intercity bus service. The current routes and coverage are described in another section of this report.

When asked what they view as the primary purpose of the passenger trips the most often mentioned purpose was to visit family, mentioned by four of the providers. Also mentioned was medical appointments (two providers), relocation, shopping and to make connections with airport, bus and train services (one provider each). One provider did not respond to the question. One provider indicated they do not care about the reason for the travel because the only concern is to get passengers from point A to point B on a service that is safe, reliable and affordable.

Market Potential

Providers were asked a series of questions about market potential and adding more frequent services.

Three providers indicated they had conducted a study of market potential and had considered adding more frequent services. New routes mentioned were Lincoln to Fremont, Lincoln to Kearney, Omaha to Fremont, Omaha to Kearney, and service in the panhandle region.

Each provider had a different reason for not implementing new services. One provider said they have concentrated on expanding in Colorado and Wyoming instead because C-DOT and W-DOT are more helpful with administration and funding. This provider wishes Nebraska would help out more. One provider said they are contemplating new services and are trying to determine feasibility. One provider said the only factor is acquiring the resources, especially drivers and vehicles. This provider believes there is plenty of demand but they will not add additional routes without a way to actually operate the routes.

Three providers indicated they had not conducted a study of market potential. Two of these have not considered adding more frequent services due to funding or state funding. The other indicated it was due to cost of fuel, insurance, repairs, cost of upgrading vans and not enough riders.

Intermodal Services

Providers were asked a series of questions about intermodal services and facilities.

Three providers indicated they connect, either directly or indirectly, with airports in Omaha and Lincoln. Three providers indicate they connect with Greyhound. Two providers indicate their routes connect with another intercity bus service provider. One provider only mentioned the bus and train stations in Lincoln. One provider indicated they are willing to take passengers to any depot or terminal or station near the scheduled route but that the bus schedule is not always going to match with the schedule of another service and the passenger may have to wait several hours. Some of these places are not safe so passengers are left at a safer place and have to take a taxi to the station.

The intermodal services are marketed in many different ways: website (4 mentions); agency brochures (2 mentions); word of mouth (2 mentions); and the NDOR transit directory, Russell's Guide, on ticket jackets, posters, postcards at the depot, salespersons, through partner-marketing with Omaha hotels, and ads (1 mention each).

Four providers indicated they operate charter services in addition to intercity bus services.

Two providers indicated there is a need for intermodal passenger facilities in their area. One provider was especially interested in a new intermodal facility in Omaha since they have to be out of the Greyhound facility by the end of the year.

Unmet Needs

Providers were asked a series of questions about unmet needs.

When asked if there are particular markets or groups that need more service, three providers answered yes and two providers answered no. The markets identified are hospital patients or those visiting patients in hospitals, especially dialysis patients; college students; and minors visiting non-custodial parents.

When asked if there is a demand to destinations that are not currently served, four providers answered yes and two providers answered no. The routes or areas mentioned are: Norfolk to Omaha; in western Nebraska, especially Sidney and Kimball; Chadron; Scottsbluff; a north/south route in the panhandle to North Platte; Broken Bow; routes near small towns; and in the middle of the Sandhills region.

Providers indicated they become aware of these needs through customers (3 mentions), Job Corp, social service agencies, colleges/universities, other carriers, and correctional facilities (1 mention each).

Needs Improvement

Providers were given an opportunity to comment on aspects of intercity bus services that need improvement. Two of the providers mentioned needing more marketing. One provider mentioned that routes are long and some individuals, especially the elderly and sick, cannot remain on the bus for long extended periods because the ride is very rough. The provider acknowledged that they have no suggestions for how to address these concerns. One provider mentioned the need to replace their fleet due to the age of the vehicles.

Unmet Public Transportation Needs

Providers were asked to identify the greatest unmet public transportation need in their rural or regional area of Nebraska. Two providers mentioned better service in the rural areas and for small towns. One provider mentioned evening and weekend service. One provider had a laundry list of items: reliable call

center; newer vehicles; more wheelchair-accessible vehicles; more drivers; and changes in minimum wage, employment laws and other regulations to make it easier to hire drivers.

Services Vulnerable to Termination

When asked if there are existing services that are vulnerable to termination in their area of Nebraska, three providers answered yes and two providers answered no. One provider said their three-days-per-week routes may be cut to two-days-per-week due to reduced State funding. One provider said they are vulnerable unless they can find more drivers, good mechanics and funding for new vehicles. One provider said their service in Kearney is vulnerable because they cannot locate an agent.

Include in Discussion

Providers were asked to identify other entities which should be included in the discussion of intercity bus services. Three providers offered suggestions: the Public Service Commission, the blind centers, the disability centers and any individual or business that needs transportation to Omaha or Lincoln.

Other Needs

At the end of the interview/questionnaire providers are given an opportunity to describe any intercity bus needs that have not been addressed in an earlier question. Three providers made comments.

1. There needs to be more public awareness.
2. There needs to be a stable base of funding for intercity bus service. During the last two years the funding has not been stable.
3. The provider had considered providing scheduled service to airports and train stations but found there was not enough demand.

V. PUBLIC INFORMATION OPEN HOUSES

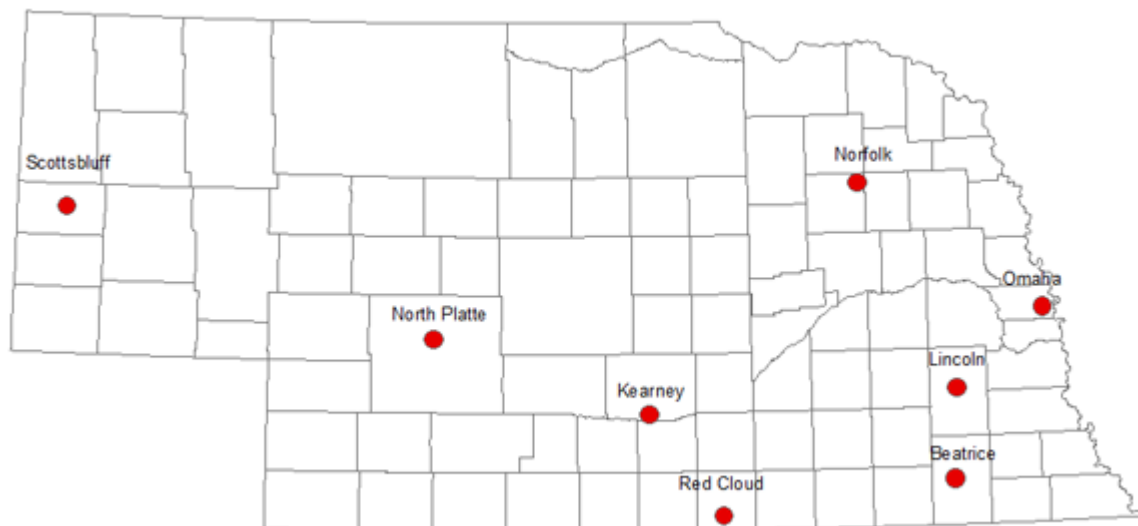
To gather input from the public a series of public information open houses were scheduled in April 2014. The dates and locations were selected in consultation with NDOR. Marketing of the open houses was done by NDOR through public notices in local newspapers, NDOR website, posters placed at bus stops, contact with intercity bus service providers and postcard mailings to organizations, business and individuals in the area near the open house site.

To assure inclusion, the population in each open house location was analyzed to determine if materials or translation services needed to be provided in languages other than English. Spanish materials and translation services were provided for the open houses in Lincoln, Omaha and Norfolk. Chinese and Vietnamese materials and translation services were provided for the open house in Lincoln.

Table 5.1. Locations of and Number of Participants at Public Information Open Houses: 2014

Location	Date	Meeting site	Number of Participants
Red Cloud	April 7	Red Cloud Community Center	4
Lincoln	April 9	State Office Building	14
Kearney	April 10	Kearney Public Library	3
Scottsbluff	April 16	Harms Advanced Technology Center	9
North Platte	April 17	McKinley Education Center	0
Beatrice	April 22	Southeast Community College campus	7
Omaha	April 24	University of Nebraska at Omaha Dodge campus	6
Norfolk	April 29	Lifelong Learning Center	3
Total Participants			46

Figure 5.1. Locations of Public Information Open Houses: 2014



Prepared by UNO Center for Public Affairs Research, June 2014

NDOR personnel gathered participant contact information and distributed materials that included a fact

sheet and the Use of Intercity Bus Service and Public Transportation Service Survey questionnaire. A copy of the Fact Sheet can be found in Appendix D.

Participants were asked to complete the survey and return it on-site or by mail. CPAR developed a series of questions to be used to guide the discussion at the open houses. These questions were used to facilitate a group discussion or a one-on-one conversation with a participant. A copy of the discussion questions can be found in Appendix C.

CPAR also created maps showing the regional municipalities and roads for each open house location. Participants were asked to highlight needed intercity bus routes.

Red Cloud Public Information Open House, April 7

There were four participants at the Red Cloud open house. All were employees of the local public transit company. A group discussion was held.

None were aware of intercity bus services in the area. All take trips of 50 miles or more on a regular basis, using a private vehicle or airplane. Most thought intercity bus service is not feasible for their purpose and are not interested unless the cost was much lower than their private vehicle.

The perception of the participants is that the local transportation provider goes to Hastings, but has to take passengers to specific locations in Hastings since there is no local transportation there to connect with. This was perceived to be the same case with Kearney. However, both areas have the same service as Webster County, but this indicates the lack of communication and cooperation amongst the rural agencies at this time.

No maps of suggested intercity bus routes were completed.

Most of the discussion centered on the local transportation service in Webster County. All participants were either drivers or managers of this program and had a difficult time viewing the service from the user's perspective. Instead most comments were about ways to improve or expand their current service. They suggested one large bus doing a circuit among all the local towns multiple times a day. There is a misconception that services are only for elderly and disabled. There is a need for more marketing, especially to young adults and those with children, and a simplified and standard schedule or more consistent availability.

Lincoln Public Information Open House, April 9

There were 14 participants at the Lincoln open house. Six were interested citizens. Two were staff of Nebraska congress members. One was the director of the local transit company. The rest were representatives of Lincoln and Lancaster County government.

At this open house study personnel spoke one-on-one or in small groups with participants. No group discussion was held.

One study member met with two public transportation users with vision impairment. They are aware of only the Greyhound intercity bus service in the area, but there is no local transportation to the bus station so it is difficult to use. They would like intercity bus service from Lincoln to Elmwood and Lincoln to Nebraska City. They takes trips of 50 miles or more several times a year using private vehicle, bus, train and airplanes. They do not need transportation to work. They are heavy users of the local public transportation service, but have to use cabs, private vehicles and walk to fill the gaps in service availability because the services do not connect to each other. They said they attended the meeting to help people understand the needs of blind passengers. They suggested distributing information through the Commission for the Blind and the National Federation of the Blind.

One study member met with five interested citizens in three separate discussions with one to two people. The first discussion was with two men who said there should be some public transportation between Lincoln and Omaha. Neither uses an intercity bus service and do not know where to catch an intercity bus in Lincoln. The second discussion was with one man who said he does not use intercity

bus service because intercity bus services do not connect with Amtrak and because local public transportation does not connect with either. The third discussion was with two women who said they do not use intercity bus services, but that a route between Lincoln and Omaha is a big issue for persons with medical needs and persons with low incomes because the cost has increased and is not affordable. The local handi-van services are not linked with senior needs and qualifications. There should be statewide subsidies for regional transportation and the same fares among all the counties. Small towns do not want their local public transportation to take residents to larger communities to shop.

Four maps of suggested intercity bus routes were completed. Routes suggested are: Nebraska City to Lincoln; Elmwood to Lincoln; Blair to Omaha; a loop from Omaha to Nebraska City to Lincoln; a loop from Omaha to Ashland to Lincoln to Wahoo to Fremont to Omaha; Lincoln to Omaha; York to Lincoln.

Kearney Public Information Open House, April 10

There were three participants at the Kearney open house. They represented the government and a local transportation provider. A group discussion was held.

Participants were aware of intercity bus services in Kearney, but did not know where the stops are located. There is a definite need for marketing. Some stated that people who live in small towns are still going to drive even if public transportation is available; others thought once you get someone to try public transportation services they will use it again. This applies to both intercity and local transportation services.

One intercity bus service provider is considered too expensive to go from Kearney to Omaha and their vans can't handle the luggage for those going to the airport. It is seen as mainly providing transportation to international students to the airport. The longer trips should use coach buses since small vehicles are too uncomfortable. More cooperation from the medical community is needed to coordinate appointments with transportation service availability.

Participants suggested that a good intercity transit system in Nebraska would be a hub and spoke system with the main route along the interstate with hubs at major cities and local transportation services used to feed passengers from other communities into these hubs.

Suggested routes are: between Grand Island and Hastings; a circuit among Kearney, Hastings and Grand Island; and between Grand Island and Kearney during peak commuting hours.

Two maps of suggested intercity bus routes were completed. One map suggested two routes, one between Hastings and Grand Island and a second route between Aurora and Lincoln using Highway 34. The second map suggested several routes: Ogallala to Columbus using Highway 30; Columbus to Norfolk; a loop from Kearney to Franklin to Alma to Holdrege to McCook to North Platte to Kearney; Grand Island to Loup City to Broken Bow; Kearney to Loup City to Broken Bow; Kearney to Sumner; Ogallala to Sidney to Scottsbluff.

There was confusion whether any of the local transportation services, public or private, connect with intercity bus routes or Amtrak. There is a need for a fixed route system in Kearney. Buffalo County has scheduled service and on demand. The new hospital will have an impact on the need. College students currently do not use the system.

Scottsbluff Public Information Open House, April 16

There were nine participants at the Scottsbluff open house. They represented the government, the local chamber of commerce, and local transportation services. A group discussion was held.

None of the participants were aware of intercity bus service in their area. One person travels over 50 miles to work every day and the majority make trips of over 50 miles on a weekly basis for shopping, medical appointments and family visits. Most of these trips are by personal vehicle.

Participants agreed that it is critical to get intercity bus service from Scottsbluff to Omaha and Lincoln

in Nebraska; and to get intercity bus service to four other major cities outside of Nebraska: Denver, Cheyenne, Rapid City and Hot Springs. It was suggested having a regular daily route through the small towns surrounding Scottsbluff and dropping them at a hub for local transportation and/or intercity transportation.

None of the participants utilize the local public transportation service. The local service does not offer weekend or evening service which limits use by those attending evening classes at the community college, high school and college sporting events and week-end workshop services. Participants were very sensitive to the recent increase in fees. Participants thought more marketing and awareness of local services is needed.

Over 30 letters of support for the local transportation service were presented at the meeting.

North Platte Public Information Open House, April 17

There were no participants at the North Platte open house.

Beatrice Public Information Open House, April 22

There were seven participants at the Beatrice open house. All were representatives from local social service agencies, adult education or transportation service providers. A group discussion was held with participants jumping in and out as they arrived and departed. Participants indicated they attended to represent their clients, many of whom could not attend the open house because it was held in the evening and no local public transportation is available in the evening.

Most participants were not aware of any intercity bus services in the area. They believe the majority of intercity bus service would be for medical appointments and access to state services so routes are needed to Lincoln and Omaha. One participant noted that the ride in some vehicles is very rough and unpleasant for elderly or medically fragile passengers. Several participants noted that users would need local transportation service in order to access the intercity bus service; and that often this service is not available.

One map was submitted with a suggested intercity bus route from Tecumseh to Beatrice to Lincoln to Omaha.

Most of the discussion concerned local public transportation. There are no evening or week-end services. The adult education representative said this creates a gap for those wanting to attend GED or ESL classes offered in the evening. Others noted this creates a problem when medical appointments run into the evening. The local service does not run in the rural areas and often rural residents cannot get to where the service begins. The Head Start representatives says 50% of parents have transportation needs and that 20% drop out due to transportation issues. One participant expressed frustration with rules that prevent providing public transportation assistance to those who own vehicles; this sometimes results in the agency providing gas vouchers instead of public transportation vouchers. Other issues preventing more use of local transportation are the cost (\$2 a trip is high for those with low income), regulations, lack of or complexity in acquiring matching funding for expansion of services, lack of safety in taxi cabs and the increase in mobility scooters.

Omaha Public Information Open House, April 24

There were six participants at the Omaha open house. Two were interested citizens. Three were representatives of the local planning agency. One was a representative of AARP.

At this open house study personnel spoke one-on-one or in small groups with participants. No group discussion was held.

One study member met with an individual in a wheelchair. The person said there needs to be coordination between all transportation services, intercity and local. He says even if a service provider says busses are accessible they sometimes are not actually able to provide this service because lifts

might be broken, the driver is not aware of the policy or the office has not informed the driver that a passenger is handicapped. Intercity bus services need to allow enough time in the schedule to load a wheelchair. There should be a way to provide additional insurance coverage for personal property in case of accident or loss for users with medical devices, such as a wheelchair, which are worth much more than the standard \$2,000 coverage. There should be some consistency in training drivers to deal with handicapped passengers.

One study member met with two representative of the local planning agency. They were not aware of any intercity bus services in the area. They personally take 12-15 trips of 50 miles or more each year. They use private vehicles and airplanes, and would like to use train if routes were available. They would like to take a bus to go to Lincoln but only if it is more convenient than driving, i.e., cost effective, quicker, with wifi so travel time is productive, and coordinated with local public transportation. They suggested Omaha to Lincoln and Omaha to Blair as obvious routes for intercity bus services. They are aware of local public transportation: metro transit, cabs, para-transit moby; and non-profits who provide transportation to their clients. The metro transit doesn't go to the intercity bus station or the Amtrak station and has few options for getting to the airport. One said they would like to use public transportation but routes and schedules are not convenient. The other said he uses public transportation all the time, but has difficulty understanding the timetable maps. He is using public transportation now to prepare for a time when he will be unable to drive himself due to aging. Both agreed that to be effective all public transportation has to be intertwined and connected and a way for users to see the entire scheme making it easier to plan a route.

Norfolk Public Information Open House, April 29

There were three participants at the Norfolk open house. The participants represented the local chamber of commerce, United Way and the local transit provider. A group discussion was held.

Participants identified three intercity bus providers in the area, but were unsure of all of the routes or pick-up locations since they had never used them. Ideas for intercity bus services included routes to medical services in Lincoln and Omaha; access to airports and to university and college campuses in Lincoln, Omaha and Wayne; and for workers going to Columbus and Wayne or coming to Norfolk from smaller towns.

Most of the discussion concerned local public transportation. There is a need for more public transportation services for participants of early childhood programs; for students who participant in sports or other afterschool or enrichment programs; and for students who can't ride the school-provided transportation because they live too close or too far away.

The public transportation representative said the service is used primarily for shopping, medical appointments and commuting to large employers. There are no fixed routes and services are arranged by calling a dispatcher. There was mixed feedback regarding a fixed route and schedule for local public transportation. Fixed routes might be used more by workers; finding matching funds might be difficult; it would take 2 to 3 years to implement; there is no interest or need for it; and those most in need of it may not be able to afford it without subsidized fares.

There was also mixed feedback regarding providing local transportation in surrounding areas. The local transportation representative did not see a need except to a couple large employers.

VI. USE OF INTERCITY BUS SERVICE AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SERVICE SURVEY

Each attendee at the public information open houses was given a brief questionnaire that asked about his or her use of intercity bus service and public transportation. A copy of the survey instrument can be found in Appendix B. This section summarizes the results from that survey.

A total of 28 persons completed the survey, and Table 6.1 shows the completions by meeting location. The largest number of respondents came from the Lincoln meetings with 10. There were 7 respondents from Beatrice, 6 from Scottsbluff, 3 from Red Cloud, and 2 from Omaha. There were no responses from North Platte and Kearney.

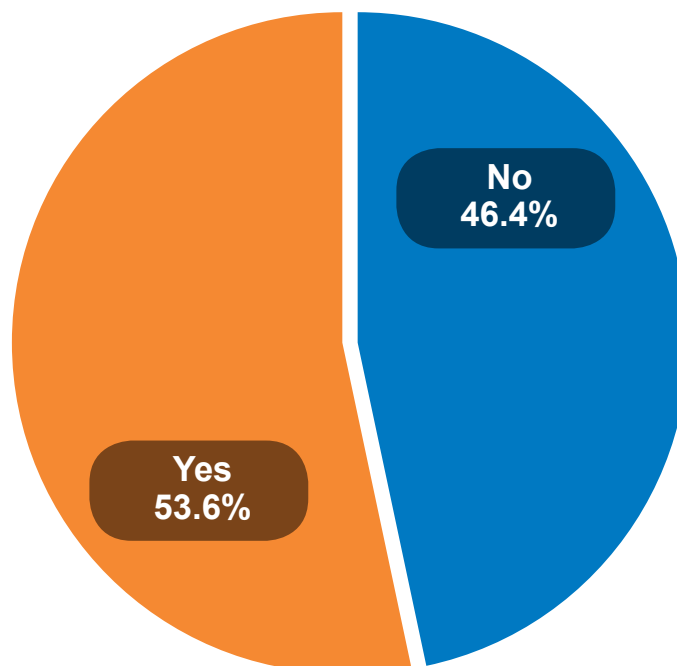
Table 6.1. Survey Respondents by Location of Open House

Location	Number	Percent
Red Cloud	3	10.7
Lincoln	10	35.7
Scottsbluff	6	21.4
Beatrice	7	25.0
Omaha	2	7.1
Total respondents	28	100.0

Intercity Bus Service

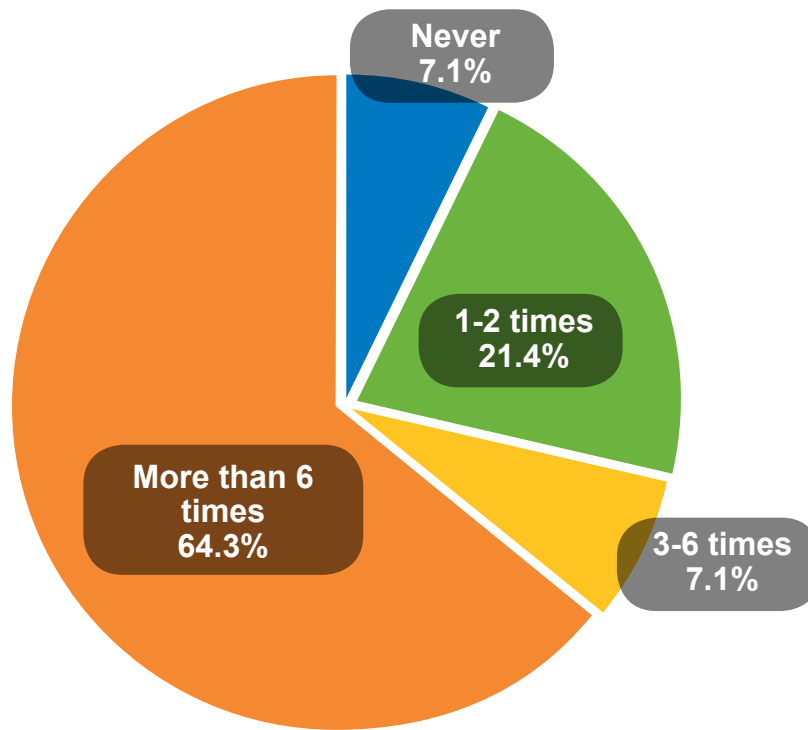
Figure 6.1 shows that the majority (53.6%) of the respondents were aware of intercity bus service in their area. This also means that even though these communities are served by intercity bus service, nearly half of the respondents were unaware of the service.

Figure 6.1. Are you aware of any Intercity Bus Service in your area? (N=28)



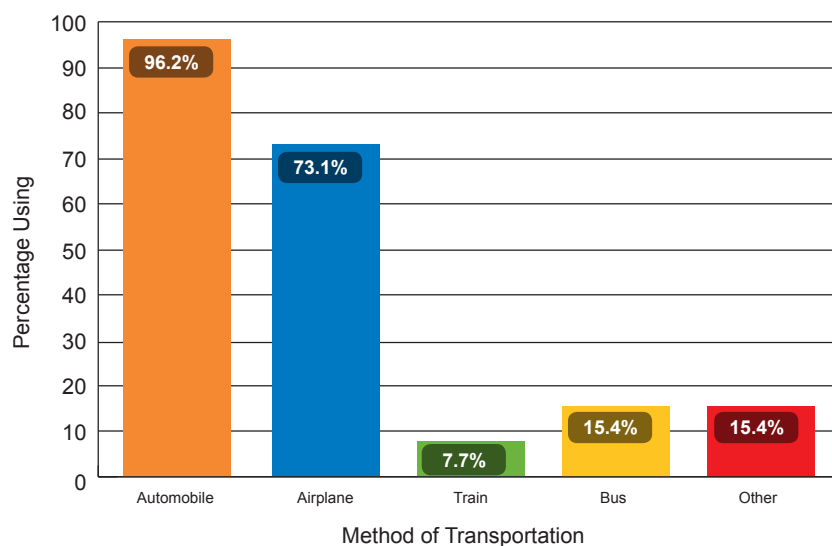
In a year, almost all the respondents took trips exceeding 50 miles. Figure 6.2 shows that 64.3% took these trips more than 6 times, 7.1% took them 3-6 times, and 21.4% took them 1-2 times per year. Only 7.1% said they never took trips of more than 50 miles.

Figure 6.2. In a year, how often do you take trips of more than 50 miles?



For those people who traveled more than 50 miles the most common method of transportation was automobile, as 96.2% of these respondents used this method of transportation (see Figure 6.3). The next most common method used was airplane (73.1%). Bus and other method were used by 15.4% of the respondents. The least used method of transportation was train (7.7%).

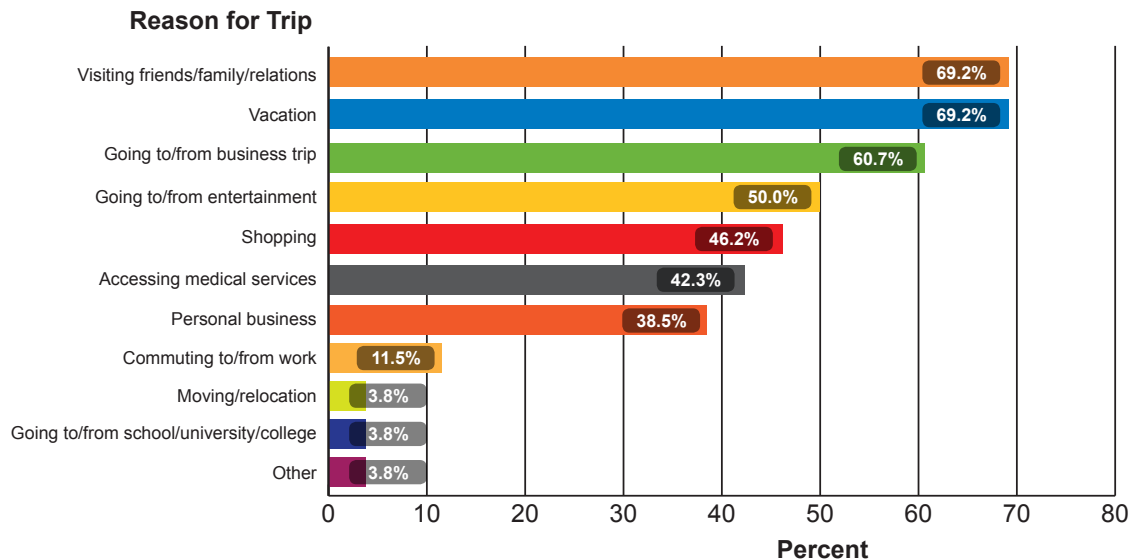
Figure 6.3. What methods* of transportation do you use? (N=26)



*Totals add to more than 100% because respondents could select more than one method.

Figure 6.4 summarizes the reasons for traveling more than 50 miles. Most of the respondents said they went this distance to visit friends/family/relations or for vacations (69.2%). In addition, 60.7% traveled on business trips, and 50.0% traveled for entertainment. Other reasons selected by more than one-third of the respondents were shopping (46.2%), accessing medical services (42.3%), and personal business (38.5%). The least selected reasons were commuting to/from work (11.5%) and moving/relocation, going to/from school/university/college, and other (3.8% each).

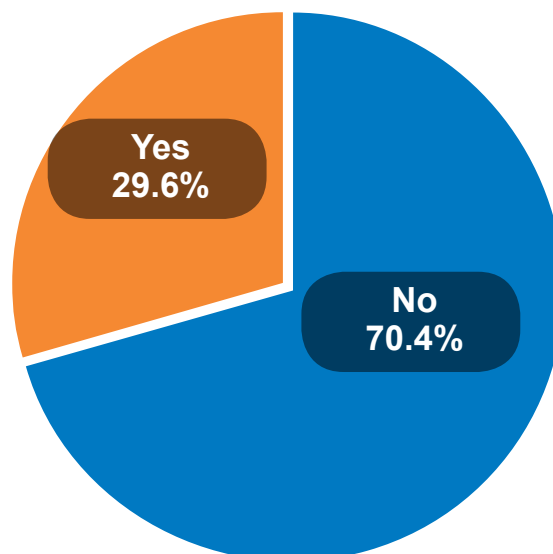
Figure 6.4. Which of the following best describes your reasons* for traveling more than 50 miles? (N=26)



*Totals add to more than 100% because respondents could select more than one reason.

As shown in Figure 6.5, when asked if they had ever used an intercity bus service, 29.6% of the respondents said yes. This means that the majority (70.4%) have never used intercity bus service.

Figure 6.5. Have you ever used an Intercity Bus Service? (N=27)



The questionnaire also asked respondents who had ever used intercity bus service how far they traveled and how they traveled to get on the intercity bus. These results are presented in Table 6.2. It is interesting to note of the 8 respondents, 5 (62.5%) traveled less than 5 miles, while the remaining 3 (37.5%) traveled 25 miles or more. To get to the bus, the largest percentage of the respondents (37.5%) drove a private vehicle. An additional 25.0% either rode a bicycle or walked. The remainder took local bus service, a taxi or shuttle service, or some other means.

Table 6.2. Travel to Intercity Bus Service

How far did you travel from your home to where you got on the Intercity Bus?		
	Number	Percent
Less than 5 miles	5	62.5
5 to 9 miles	0	0.0
10 to 24 miles	0	0.0
25 miles or more	3	37.5
Total	8	100.0

How did you travel to where you got on the Intercity Bus?		
	Number	Percent
Private vehicle	3	37.5
Bicycle/Walk	2	25.0
Local bus service	1	12.5
Taxi/shuttle service	1	12.5
Other	1	12.5
Total	8	100.0

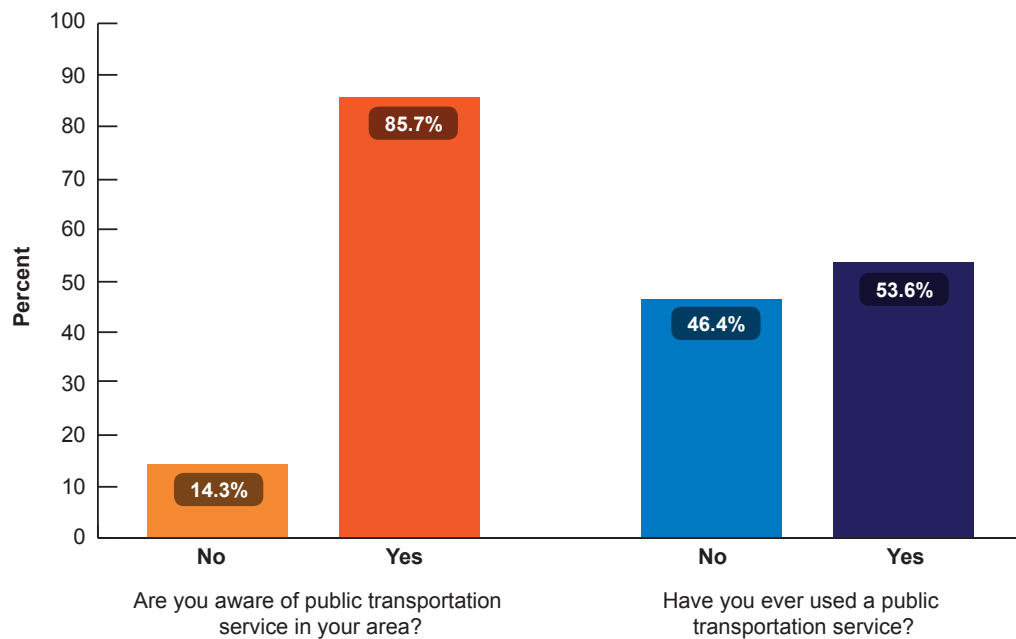
Respondents who did not travel by intercity bus service were asked an open-ended question that asked them to describe what it would take for them to use an intercity bus service. Over one-half (53.3%) of the persons answering the question mentioned availability, accessibility, or scheduling. Having a need such as a disability or inability to drive and cost were both mentioned by 26.7% of the respondents. The other item listed by at least 10% of the respondents was routes or destinations (13.3%).

Public Transportation

The next set of questions asked about public transportation in the area. Figure 6.6 shows that 85.7% of the respondents were aware of public transportation in their area, but only 53.6% had ever used public transportation.

The next set of questions were open-ended and asked about the respondents' use of public transportation. For the persons who used public transportation, the most common destination (33.3%) was work. This was followed by doctor or medical appointment and attending an event or shopping, both of which were mentioned by 25.0% of those who answered the question.

The primary reason mentioned for using public transportation was lack of vehicle or inability to drive (30.8%). This was followed by cost (23.1%) and availability or convenience (15.4%). The reasons for not using public transportation were similar to those for using intercity bus services. The most common reason given for not using public transportation was availability or schedules with 60.0% of the respondents listing this as a reason. Cost was mentioned by 50.0% of those responding. Need was listed by 30.0% of the respondents.

Figure 6.6. Awareness and Usage of Public Transportation

Demographics

The final set of questions measures some demographic characteristics of the respondents. Looking at Table 6.3, it can be seen that all age groups were represented by the respondents. Although one-third of the respondents were aged 50 to 64, there was a representative number in each of the other age groups. The race and ethnicity of the respondents was not very representative of the state as a whole. Nearly 90% were White, non-Hispanic, with the remainder Asian or some other race. There were no African-Americans or Latinos who participated in the survey.

Table 6.3. Survey Demographics

What is your age?	Number	Percent
19-34 years	5	18.5
35-49 years	5	18.5
50-64 years	9	33.3
65 years or older	8	29.6
Total	27	100.0

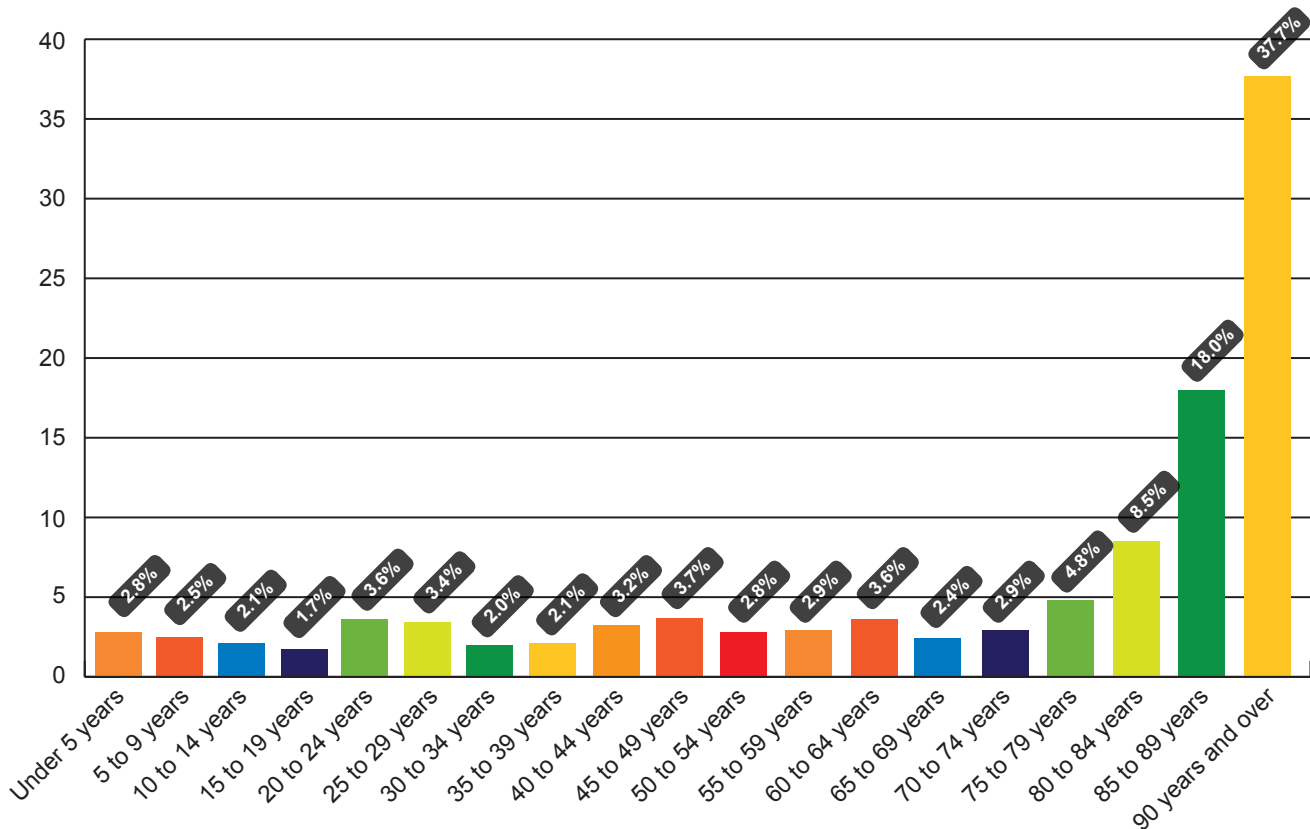
What is your race or ethnicity?	Number	Percent
White	25	89.3
Black	0	0.0
American Indian or Alaska Native	0	0.0
Asian	2	7.1
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0	0.0
Hispanic/Latino	0	0.0
Other	1	3.6
Total	28	100.0

VII. VEHICLE ACCESS

Households with No Vehicles Available

The 2008-2012 American Community Survey from the U.S. Census Bureau shows that statewide about 5.8% of the households have no vehicle available. Figure 7.1 illustrates that this varies considerably by age of people living in households. Until about age 80 years, the percentage of persons with no vehicle available in their household varies between 2% and 5%. After age 80, the percentage increases rapidly. For persons aged 90 years and over, the percentage with no vehicle available approaches 40%.

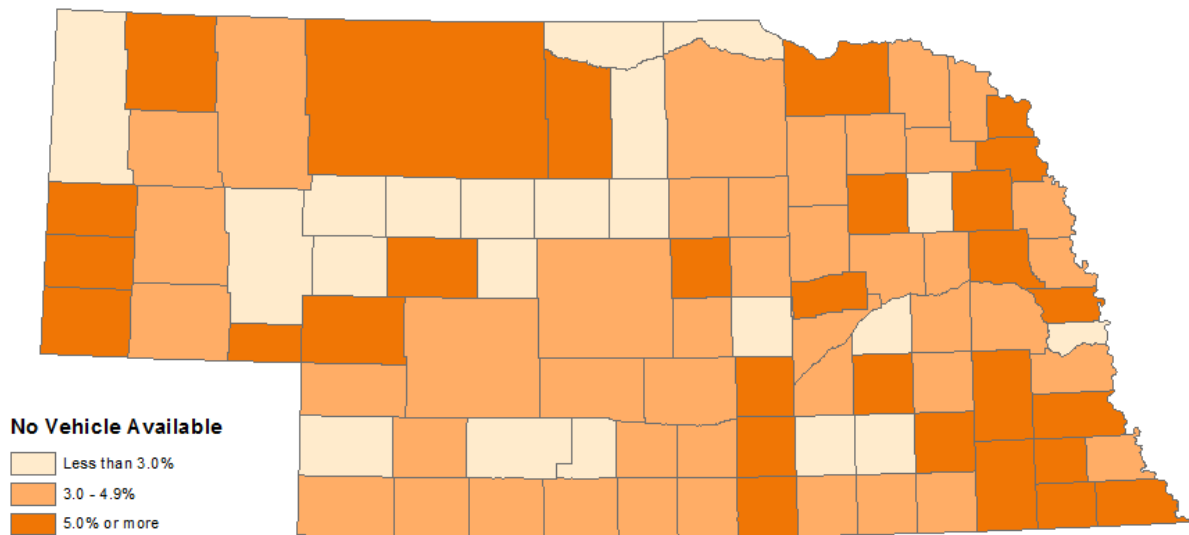
Figure 7.1. Percentage of Persons Living in Households with No Vehicle Available by Age for Nebraska: 2008-2012



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008-2012 American Community Survey Public Use Microdata File, calculations by UNO Center for Public Affairs Research, June 2014.

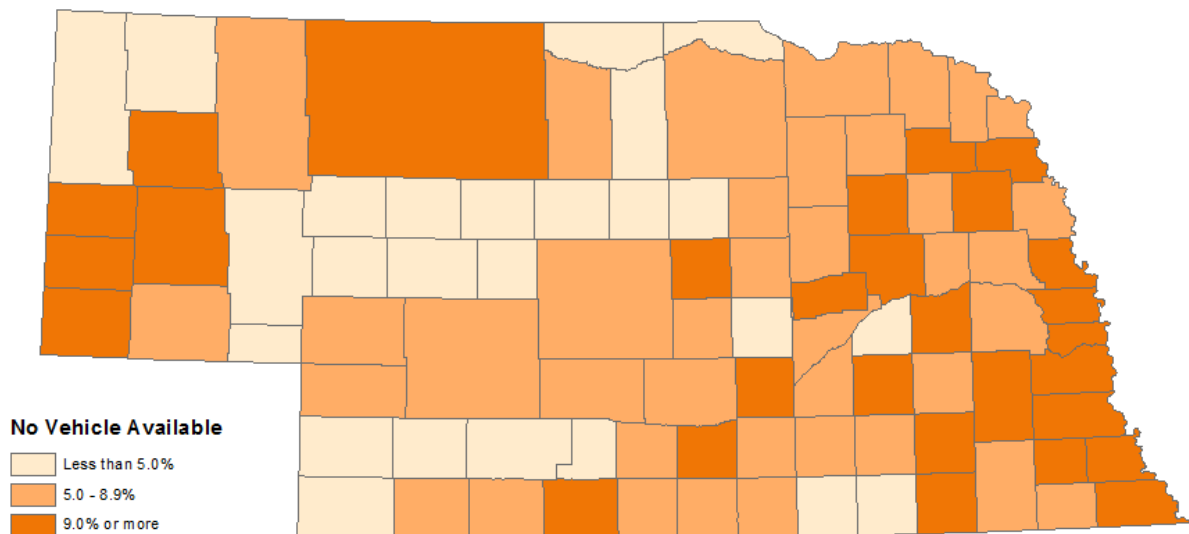
Figure 7.1 presents data for persons living in households. However, at the county level, data are available only for households. Figures 7.2 and 7.3 and Table 7.1 present data for all households and for households with a householder aged 65 years or older. Looking at Figure 7.2 shows, that in 29 counties, 5.0% or more households do not have access to a vehicle. Figure 7.3 shows, that in 29 counties, 9.0% or more of households with a householder aged 65 years or older do not have access to a vehicle.

Figure 7.2. Percent of households with no vehicle available, Nebraska: 2008-2012



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community 2008-2012 Survey 5-Year Estimate
Prepared by UNO Center for Public Affairs Research, June 2014

Figure 7.3. Percent of households with householder aged 65 years or older, Nebraska: 2008-2012



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community 2008-2012 Survey 5-Year Estimate
Prepared by UNO Center for Public Affairs Research, June 2014

Table 7.1. Households with no vehicle available by age, Nebraska: 2008- 2012

Households				Households with householder aged 65 years or older		
No Vehicle Available				No Vehicle Available		
County	Number	Number	Percent	Number	Number	Percent
Nebraska	721,026	41,726	5.8	158,705	16,632	10.5
Adams	12,559	660	5.3	3,149	249	7.9
Antelope	2,836	95	3.3	893	74	8.3
Arthur	180	0	0.0	57	0	0.0
Banner	309	28	9.1	80	24	30.0
Blaine	244	4	1.6	50	0	0.0
Boone	2,315	95	4.1	733	42	5.7
Box Butte	4,849	198	4.1	1,110	156	14.1
Boyd	899	23	2.6	354	4	1.1
Brown	1,480	76	5.1	508	42	8.3
Buffalo	17,462	723	4.1	3,586	275	7.7
Burt	2,938	138	4.7	992	67	6.8
Butler	3,508	130	3.7	1,059	95	9.0
Cass	9,714	347	3.6	2,128	195	9.2
Cedar	3,435	116	3.4	1,113	76	6.8
Chase	1,718	41	2.4	494	15	3.0
Cherry	2,534	146	5.8	789	71	9.0
Cheyenne	4,438	134	3.0	1,029	54	5.2
Clay	2,647	55	2.1	719	37	5.1
Colfax	3,635	166	4.6	944	63	6.7
Cuming	3,750	213	5.7	1,206	117	9.7
Custer	4,636	136	2.9	1,435	95	6.6
Dakota	7,253	588	8.1	1,409	97	6.9
Dawes	3,772	200	5.3	1,002	33	3.3
Dawson	8,853	307	3.5	2,141	138	6.4
Deuel	854	42	4.9	318	10	3.1
Dixon	2,373	109	4.6	701	61	8.7
Dodge	15,293	817	5.3	4,286	357	8.3
Douglas	20,2215	16,614	8.2	36,727	5,390	14.7
Dundy	906	32	3.5	273	6	2.2
Fillmore	2,498	61	2.4	783	52	6.6
Franklin	1,382	58	4.2	469	25	5.3
Frontier	1,108	25	2.3	300	9	3.0
Furnas	2,177	92	4.2	725	70	9.7
Gage	9,027	530	5.9	2,798	241	8.6
Garden	869	5	0.6	345	5	1.4
Garfield	882	35	4.0	335	13	3.9
Gosper	784	11	1.4	233	8	3.4
Grant	243	6	2.5	77	1	1.3

Households				Households with householder aged 65 years or older		
No Vehicle Available				No Vehicle Available		
County	Number	Number	Percent	Number	Number	Percent
Greeley	1,022	37	3.6	381	30	7.9
Hall	22,106	1,392	6.3	4,698	541	11.5
Hamilton	3,408	105	3.1	869	51	5.9
Harlan	1,525	51	3.3	505	25	5.0
Hayes	425	16	3.8	148	5	3.4
Hitchcock	1,356	42	3.1	443	34	7.7
Holt	4,314	183	4.2	1,340	91	6.8
Hooker	294	0	0.0	107	0	0.0
Howard	2,629	57	2.2	818	22	2.7
Jefferson	3,276	160	4.9	1,069	104	9.7
Johnson	1,943	116	6.0	604	87	14.4
Kearney	2,586	101	3.9	714	86	12.0
Keith	3,765	223	5.9	1,219	99	8.1
Keya Paha	369	5	1.4	130	2	1.5
Kimball	1,681	126	7.5	602	88	14.6
Knox	3,768	194	5.1	1,213	99	8.2
Lancaster	113,724	7,079	6.2	20,247	2,537	12.5
Lincoln	15,028	708	4.7	3,662	283	7.7
Logan	328	5	1.5	113	2	1.8
Loup	233	2	0.9	70	2	2.9
McPherson	172	14	8.1	55	0	0.0
Madison	13,923	687	4.9	3,171	317	10.0
Merrick	3,266	129	3.9	906	51	5.6
Morrill	2,084	99	4.8	655	66	10.1
Nance	1,546	95	6.1	431	70	16.2
Nemaha	3,052	145	4.8	890	98	11.0
Nuckolls	2,069	78	3.8	788	28	3.6
Otoe	6,439	403	6.3	1,837	267	14.5
Pawnee	1,309	80	6.1	448	24	5.4
Perkins	1,219	58	4.8	365	30	8.2
Phelps	3,875	136	3.5	1,097	80	7.3
Pierce	2,935	97	3.3	773	50	6.5
Platte	12,467	562	4.5	3,137	337	10.7
Polk	2,225	50	2.2	610	8	1.3
Red Willow	4,799	150	3.1	1,335	107	8.0
Richardson	3,782	201	5.3	1,216	147	12.1
Rock	661	11	1.7	222	9	4.1
Saline	5,026	349	6.9	1,298	181	13.9
Sarpy	58,876	1,704	2.9	8,579	873	10.2
Saunders	8,149	334	4.1	2,085	168	8.1
Scotts Bluff	14,886	948	6.4	3,900	353	9.1

Households				Households with householder aged 65 years or older		
No Vehicle Available				No Vehicle Available		
County	Number	Number	Percent	Number	Number	Percent
Seward	6,269	226	3.6	1,567	107	6.8
Sheridan	2,373	98	4.1	837	71	8.5
Sherman	1,366	63	4.6	507	45	8.9
Sioux	559	14	2.5	176	5	2.8
Stanton	2,392	47	2.0	548	32	5.8
Thayer	2,254	67	3.0	838	40	4.8
Thomas	328	0	0.0	89	0	0.0
Thurston	2,045	188	9.2	564	57	10.1
Valley	1,886	120	6.4	649	67	10.3
Washington	7,596	351	4.6	1816	177	9.7
Wayne	3,318	157	4.7	805	98	12.2
Webster	1,564	78	5.0	521	33	6.3
Wheeler	329	10	3.0	95	6	6.3
York	5,632	319	5.7	1,593	175	11.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community 2008-2012 Survey 5-Year Estimate
 Prepared by UNO Center for Public Affairs Research, June 2014

VIII. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In summary, intercity bus service in Nebraska is limited both by the number of providers and potential riders. NDOR is committed to providing an accessible, cost effective public transportation system across the state. This system must include a robust intercity bus network to connect the rural population with urbanized areas and intermodal transportation.

NDOR will implement the following action plan to increase and improve intercity bus service in the state:

1. Develop a statewide marketing plan for public transportation to include specific strategies for intercity bus service. The marketing plan will also identify and target the demographic populations most impacted by public transportation availability including elderly, disabled, and low income individuals.
2. Work with rural transit systems and metropolitan planning organizations to establish additional feeder routes that connect the rural population with transportation opportunities in urbanized areas.
3. Increase awareness of available intercity bus funding and actively recruit participation of other providers. NDOR will use the Iowa DOT's intercity bus guidance as a model.
4. Assist Ponca Express in Norfolk with both technical assistance and funding to expand their intercity bus service to Lincoln, Omaha, and South Sioux City.

IX. APPENDICES

Appendix A. Intercity Bus Service Provider Questionnaire

Appendix B. Sample of Use of Intercity Bus Service and Public Transportation Service Survey Questionnaire

Appendix C. Questions for Public Information Open House Discussions

Appendix D. Sample of Fact Sheet Distributed at Public Information Open Houses

APPENDIX A

Intercity Bus Service Provider Questionnaire

Name _____

Title _____

Intercity Bus Provider _____

Phone Number _____

Email Address _____

Current Intercity Bus Services

Intercity bus service is defined as: *Regularly scheduled bus service for the general public that operates with limited stops over fixed routes connecting two or more urban areas not in close proximity, that has the capacity for transporting baggage carried by passengers, and which makes meaningful connections with scheduled intercity bus service to more distant points, if such service is available.*

Based on the definition of intercity bus service, do you operate any scheduled intercity bus services in Nebraska?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please describe in terms of stops served, scheduled, etc. (attach timetables or other information if available.) _____

What do you view as the primary purpose of the passenger trips in your identified intercity bus route(s)?

What is the average monthly ridership on your intercity bus routes in Nebraska? _____

Have you conducted a study of market potential? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Have you ever considered adding more frequent service? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Do you have future plans to expand or create additional routes? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please specify the new routes and the cities they would include. _____

What, if anything, has prevented your from implementing new services? _____

Intermodal Services

Do your intercity bus routes connect with other intercity bus services on either/both sides of the route?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please explain. _____

Do you operate any other kinds of services, such as connections to airports or train stations, charter or tour services? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please describe. _____

How/where do you make information of these services available to the public? (E.g., Websites, brochures, posted scheduled, etc.) _____

Do you presently have a need in your area for intermodal passenger facilities that could allow connections between local public transportation and intercity bus? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Needs

Are there particular markets or groups that you see needing more service? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please identify the markets or groups. _____

Is there a demand for intercity bus services to destinations that you do not currently serve?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please identify route(s) by origin/destination pairs that could benefit most from the provision or improvement of service. _____

If yes, how did you become aware of this demand?

☐ Customers

☐ Social service agencies

☐ Colleges/Universities

☐ Military installations

☐ Other _____

Please offer any comments regarding other aspects of intercity bus services that you see as needing improvement, such as vehicles, condition of bus facilities, schedule information, wheelchair accessibility, marketing, etc.

Including the need for intercity bus service (as defined above), what are the greatest unmet public transportation needs in your rural or regional area of Nebraska, beginning with the need with the highest priority?

Are there existing intercity and public transportation services that are vulnerable to termination in your area of Nebraska? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please explain. _____

What other county/regional entities could benefit from being included in the discussion of intercity bus services in the area of Nebraska you serve? _____

Please describe any intercity bus needs that you have not addressed in an earlier question.

APPENDIX B

Sample of Use of Intercity Bus Service and Public Transportation Service Survey Questionnaire



Use of Intercity Bus Service and Public Transportation Service Survey

Wednesday, April 9, 2014, 5:00-7:00 p.m.

State Office Building, Lower Level A Theatre, 301 Centennial Mall South, Lincoln, NE

The first set of questions is about intercity bus service. **Intercity Bus Service** is defined as: Regularly scheduled bus service for the general public which operates with limited stops over fixed routes connecting two or more urban areas not in close proximity, that has the capacity for transporting baggage carried by passengers, and that makes meaningful connections with scheduled intercity bus service to more distant points, if such service is available.

1. Are you aware of any Intercity Bus Service in your area? (*select one*) ☐ Yes ☐ No
2. In a year, how often do you take trips of more than 50 miles? (*select one*)
 - ☐ Never -----> Go to Question 5
 - ☐ 1-2 times
 - ☐ 3-6 times
 - ☐ More than 6 times
3. What methods of transportation do you use? (*check all that apply*)
 - ☐ Automobile
 - ☐ Airplane
 - ☐ Train
 - ☐ Bus
 - ☐ Other
4. Which of the following best describes your reasons for traveling more than 50 miles? (*check all that apply*)
 - ☐ Commuting to/from work
 - ☐ Going to/from a business trip (meeting, convention, training, etc.)
 - ☐ Going to/from school/university/college
 - ☐ Accessing medical services
 - ☐ Going to/from entertainment (theater, concert, sports)
 - ☐ Visiting friends/family/relations
 - ☐ Shopping
 - ☐ Personal business
 - ☐ Moving/relocating
 - ☐ Vacation
 - ☐ Other, please specify _____
5. Have you ever used an Intercity Bus Service? (*select one*)
 - ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No -----> Go to question 9.
6. How far did you travel from your home to where you got on the Intercity Bus? (*select one*)
 - ☐ Less than 5 miles
 - ☐ 5 to 9 miles
 - ☐ 10 to 24 miles
 - ☐ 25 miles or more

7. How did you travel to where you got on the Intercity Bus? (*select one*)

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Private vehicle | <input type="checkbox"/> Bicycle/Walk |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local bus service | <input type="checkbox"/> Amtrak train |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Taxi/shuttle service | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify _____ | |

8. Why did you use an Intercity Bus Service for your travel over 50 miles?

9. If you do not travel by Intercity Bus Service, what would it take for you to use an Intercity Bus Service?

This next set of questions is about public transportation services. **Public Transportation Service** means the operation of a vehicle that provides general or special service to the public on a regular and continuing basis.

10. Are you aware of any public transportation service in your area? (*select one*) ☐ Yes ☐ No
11. Have you ever used a public transportation service? (*select one*)
 - ☐ Yes ☐ No -----> Go to Question 14
12. If yes, where did you go using a public transportation service?

13. Why did you use a public transportation service?

14. If you do not use public transportation services, what would it take for you to use a public transportation service?

This final set of questions is about you.
(*These questions are optional.*)

15. What is your age? (*select one*)
 - ☐ 19-34 years ☐ 35-49 years
 - ☐ 50-64 years ☐ 65 years or older
16. What is your race or ethnicity? (*check all that apply*)
 - ☐ White ☐ Black or African American
 - ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
 - ☐ Asian
 - ☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
 - ☐ Hispanic/Latino ☐ Other race

Thank you for participating in this survey.

APPENDIX C

Questions for Public Information Open House Discussions

Intercity Bus Services

Regularly scheduled bus service for the general public which operates with limited stops over fixed routes connecting two or more urban areas not in close proximity, that has the capacity for transporting baggage carried by passengers, and that makes meaningful connections with scheduled intercity bus service to more distance points if such service is available.

Are you aware of any Intercity Bus Service in your area?

In a year, how often do you take trips of more than 50 miles?

What methods of transportation do you use: car, bus, train, airplane?

Do you commute that far to work?

For what other reasons did you travel?

For those who traveled by bus, how far did you have to go to meet the bus, and how did you get there?

For those who traveled by bus, where did you go?

For those who traveled by bus, why did you use the bus?

For those who did not travel by bus, what would it take for you to use a bus?

Public Transportation Service

The operation of a vehicle that provides general or special service to the public on a regular and continuing basis. Sometimes it is called public transit.

Are you aware of any public transportation services in your area?

Have you ever used public transportation services; if so, where did you go?

For those who have used public transportation services, why did you use public transportation services?

For those who haven't used public transportation services, what would it take for you to use public transportation services?

APPENDIX D

Sample of Fact Sheet distributed at Public Information Open Houses



PUBLIC INFORMATION OPEN HOUSE MEETING

State Office Building-Lower Level A Theatre, 301 Centennial Mall South, Lincoln Nebraska
Wednesday, April 9, 2014; 5:00–7:00 PM

Intercity Bus Usage Study in Nebraska

The Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR) in collaboration with the University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO) will hold a state-wide series of public information open house meetings to provide information and to gather input from the community to assess needs in intercity bus and public transit services. The information received from the meetings and surveys will be compiled and used in an overall study. The information will also be used to assess the feasibility of implementing a Statewide Mobility Management System to coordinate transit services.

Intercity Bus Service is defined by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) as “Regularly scheduled bus service for the general public which operates with limited stops over fixed routes connecting two or more urban areas not in close proximity, that has the capacity for transporting baggage carried by passengers, and that makes meaningful connections with scheduled intercity bus service to more distant points, if such service is available.”

Public Transportation Service means the operation of a vehicle that provides general or special service to the public on a regular and continuing basis. Sometimes it is called public transit.

Mobility Management System is defined as a strategic approach to service coordination among transportation providers to create a full range of well synchronized transit services within a community.

Limited intercity bus service is available in forty five (45) of Nebraska's ninety three (93) counties. Those forty five counties contain more than eighty six (86) percent of Nebraska's total population. In addition, public transportation in the rural areas is provided by 61 transit systems. The large urbanized areas of Lincoln and Omaha are served by StarTran and Metro respectively. Nebraska has nine (9) intercity bus providers currently providing service on various routes across the state. Those providers include:

- Dashabout Roadrunner (Subsidized)
- Dashabout Shuttle (Unsubsidized)
- K & S Express (Subsidized)
- Black Hills Stage Lines (Subsidized)
- Blue Rivers Area Agency on Aging (Subsidized)
- Denver Coach (Unsubsidized)
- Arrow Stage Lines (Unsubsidized)
- Burlington Trailways (Unsubsidized)
- Navigator Express (Unsubsidized)
- Omalink (Unsubsidized)
- Ponca Express (Subsidized directly through FTA)

Thanks for your participation.